

some definite idea was conveyed thereby to Moses and to the people is obvious, and it is no less certain that it was connected in some way with the first and only other mention of cherubim in the third chapter of Genesis, ver. 24, "So He drove out the man ; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, to keep the way of the tree of life." This narrative was unquestionably familiar both to Moses and to those who wrought with him ; and it is therefore certain that the cherubim of the ark and the Tabernacle would recall and suggest to the imagination the cherubim placed at the east of the garden of Eden. If, however, the narrative in Genesis was subsequent to the prescriptions of Exodus, then these latter were doubtless in the mind of the writer ; and if it was prior to them, as there can be no reasonable doubt that it was, then it is hardly less certain that these prescriptions were intended to refer to it. And if so, then we arrive at a definite purpose in the appointment of these cherubim as part of the furniture of the Holy of Holies and of the veil concealing it. They pointed back in a very significant way to the original guardians of the tree of life, and to the temporary exclusion of man from access to Him "in whose presence is life," and from contact with the tree of life. Till man was redeemed, it was not possible for him to have unrestrained access to the presence of God. There were positive hindrances on the part of God, and there were personal hindrances on the part of man, as signified by "the flame of the sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life." How great these were was shown by the fierce and bloody rites characteristic of heathen worship, by which it was attempted and hoped to avert the anger of the Deity. Man could find no certain standing ground upon which to approach the presence of God or to win His favour ; he was fain to "give his firstborn for his transgression, the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul ;" and when he had done so, something told him he was no nearer than he was before to the desired end. The way of life and of access to the tree of life was unalterably barred ; and do what he would, he could not pass through. And this, which was the